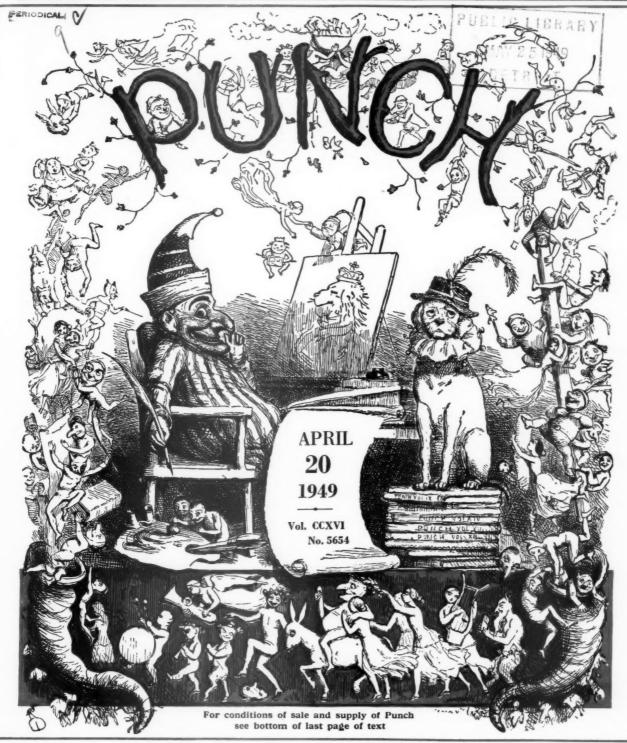
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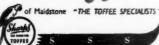
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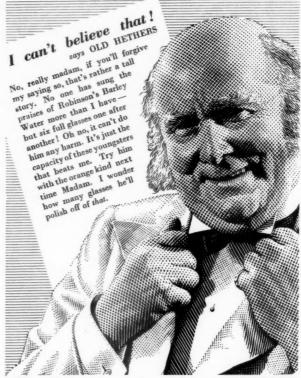
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IN farmhouse and in hall did our fathers once brew their beer — and much of it was poor. In towns, "brewers for sale" and "butt-women" did oft-times worse. Only the monastery beer was of good repute, for here cleanliness was a rule of life and the craft unhurried (since they brewed not for profit). So when the Dissolution cast these brewermonks upon the world, they brought their methods to foundations of another sort. The Abbots and the Abbey wells of Burton, between them had already brewed a famous ale since 1295, and here the craft suffered not by the change. And so to your Bass and its bold cousin Worthington—drawing still that water from their private wells, following yet the old scrupulous, unhurried ways...masters, the Great Beers of England are still a-brewing!









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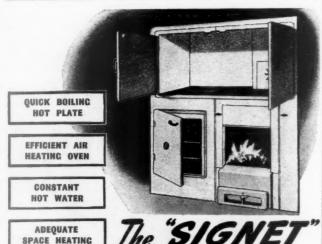


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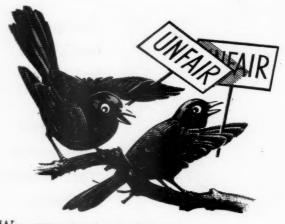
No grounds, no bother, no coffee-pot to washand you have . . .

coffee

-Sniff that roaster-fresh fragrance-taste that full-bodied flavour-you'll agree Nescafé makes nicer coffee as well as quicker coffee every time, for Nescafé never varies because the goodness is sealed in by the special Nestlé process. Ask your grocer today for a tin of Nescafé.



Nescafé is a soluble coffee product composed of coffee olids, with dextrins, maltose and dextrose, added to retain



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Canned English Fruits and Vegetables, Salad Cream, Tomato Ketchup and other good things from Orchard and Garden

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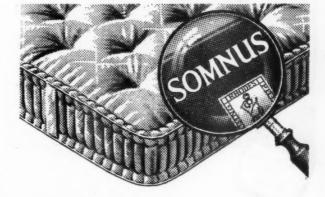


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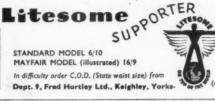


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STANDARD MODEL 6/10 MAYFAIR MODEL (illustrated) 16/9





puff but never to blow, to smoke but never to burn-this is the wisdom of the man who packs his pipe with Balkan Sobranie. He hides irritation in the smoke clouds, he sees more clearly through the smoke rings, he finds answers to the unsolvable in its aroma. And when so much discord is piping up, he has the sense to light up and pipe down . . .

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Vapex 2/6 Inhaler 1/3 Vapex-Volatal 1/9 THOMAS KERFOOT & CO. LTD ENGLAND.

JAMAICA JO'S MORNING MAIL....No. 3



Desperate Daddy writes:

"Whenever I think of the approaching holiday season I come over all of a shud-der. My twin sons, Rack and Ruin, can be guaranteed to involve me in not less than six lawsuits in the course of a three-hour journey. Ought I to buy myself a bottle of arsenic before it goes on the ration?"

Jamaica Jo says:

"I wouldn't, Desperate Daddy. Buy a bottle of Jamaica Rum instead. Take a to before you start your journey and your tein tots will seem much more bearable. You will automatically have the holiday spirit. One swallow can make a summer."

Recipe for Jamaica Orange

Head and shoulders above any other Orange drink you ever tasted—and refreshingly simple to make. The ingredients are: I measure of J.R., I measure Orange Squash, I measure French Vermouth. Add ice and stir.

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FURNITURE



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The re-planned Leader Magazine has now appeared three times in its exciting new form.

The old title now stands for a new theme, and for an ambitious new aim—to introduce you to a new world, the world of your own everyday life.

Nine-tenths of our waking life we are sleepwalking. Eye on the clock, train-catching, reading the headlines, queueing for cigarettes, the cinema, worrying about the interview, about Time. All this is existence, but it is not living. Even our spare

time is often spent in an effort to kill time. This magazine is not for killing time, but for living time. It sees with the author's eye, and with the naturalist's, the artist's, the psychologist's eye. It sees today's headlines, too, through the eye of time, the historian's eye, for that extra pleasure of understanding the present in the context of the past. If you believe in living your time; if you enjoy good reading and want 'something better to read', take a look at the new



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As you are carried smoothly and swiftly across France in your Wagon-lit or Couchette you are crossing other sleepers—2112 of them to the mile—each of which must be in precise alignment if the train is to travel without jolt or swerve. Hundreds of men patrol the French Railways every day to scrutinize such details. To help them they have precision instruments such as this *Dansometre* which makes an exact measurement of inequalities of track bed invisible to the eye.

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"You can't tell me. old chap!"

"I've tackled this shaving problem from all angles and I know this-you can't beat a first-class blade for value, and there's nothing finer than a Wilkinson Long Life Hollow Ground Blade. Made by a firm who have been forging cutting edges for over 170 years, it'll give you the cleanest, smoothest shave you've ever hadand, what's more, it'll last you longer. So it stands to reason that a Wilkinson Razor Set is the best investment for any man . . . any time."

Illustrated here is the Wilkinson Safety Razor 7-day Set, including Wilkinson Self-Stropping Ho!low Ground Blades. Price 60/- inc. P.T. Ask your stockist to show you this and other sets in the range.



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THE NEW 'JOVE' hand-spray applies T'JOVE' wax-spray polish in one smooth even coat, then you shine! Genuine wax polish and protection for your car without the hard work of old hand methods. Special chrome polish for windows, etc., included in kit. Economical; one light application lasts months! Re-shines easily.

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BY 'JOVE'! YOUR CAR LOOKS NEW!

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TAKE the tea-planter in Stockholm the shopkeeper in Stockholm in Chicago each needs a car. And each knows what he wants. Roominess and power, certainly. Good looks, of course. course. So we in the Standard Organisation have designed a car for the world. A single model produced in a plant so planned that alternative types of engine - to power either

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The STANDARD Vanguard



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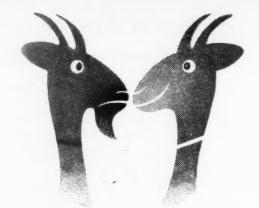
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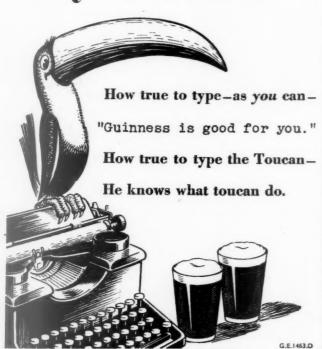


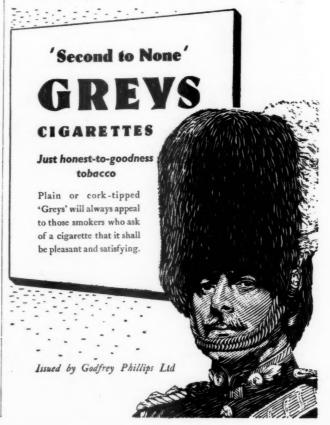
It's the fashion, Mr. Barratt, these days to talk about the high cost of living. But there's no charge for a spring morning in the countryside. The price of nature doesn't go up! And if you're walking the Barratt way — why, even your feet feel free!

Walk the Barratt way

Barratts, Northampton-and branches throughout the country

My Goodness











April 20 1949

Charivaria

A PLEASING feature of the Budget that apparently escaped general notice was that income-tax envelopes are still carried under the old minimum postal rate.

A railway official says he is always glad when Easter is over. But surely that only brings Whitsun nearer?



Naturalists report that the bright lights of London are now attracting moths by the thousand. Now is the time to throw open your wardrobe doors.

"The Australian Wheat Board will deliver 2,500,000 bushels of what to New Zealand between June and December this year." Australia House News Sheet.

All right. Give us the money.

The magic-lantern is becoming popular again as home entertainment. With a little judicious joggling a realistic television effect is produced.

"Miss Maxwell, a daughter of Wing-Commander Maxwell, of Hampshire, helps to run her father's estate there and often works in gumboots and slacks in the watercress beds." Ah well, all work and no play . . . "Yorkshire Evening Post."

An ichthyologist describes an armour-plated fish found in South American waters. The advantage of this variety from the Food Ministry standpoint is that it is already tinned.

"Buy your husband a spring hat," urges a woman writer. If he doesn't care for opera it will at least keep the baby amused.

"Owing to the mild winter," writes a horticulturist, "everything in your garden should now be well forward." It is; we have already been stung by a nettle in ours.

"At the end of 1948 114,721 telephone subscribers were sharing a line."—"Daily Telegraph." Just like swallows.

Women with artificial eyelashes are out of place, we are told, in the business world. Then what's this we hear about a successful flutter on the Stock Exchange?

"Be thankful eigarettes aren't nationalized," says a columnist, "or you might be paying twice as much for them." On the other hand, one might get a packet in triplicate now and again.

The punch that won a recent boxing contest was described by the critics as travelling not more than four inches. We can only surmise that the defeated pugilist was standing too close to it.

"When the star murders her part, what can a producer do?" asks a film critic. Shoot.



Interval for Self-Pity

T Easter the mature, clad in indescribable pantaloons, traditionally plant potatoes, spacing them ten inches apart and standing them upright in the drill (if they know what they are about) on a bed of leaf-mould. Younger men, in their early twenties, eschew potatoplanting, inclining more towards the purchase of new grey flannel trousers—not so much by tradition in this case as by instinct.

The instinct is sound. Of all the pleasures that youth affords the assumption of new grey flannels is, unless the colour is seen, too late, to be either too light or too dark, among the purest and most unalloyed. The creases run down like tramlines from waist to foot. The turn-ups rest discreetly, light as a butterfly's wing, upon the upper instep. Into the cool, clean pockets the hands slip easily through the cunningly slanted openings. There is a smoothness And the backs of the knees! An old pair of trousers, their shape distorted by constant down-sittings and uprisings, will bear against the back of the knees with a cloying persistency that, if we only paused to think about it, would make the act of walking well-nigh unbearable. The new pair, hanging straight and true from hip to ankle, leave this important part of the body (about which we far too seldom think) free and unconfined; and there results a sense of airy well-being which is of the very essence of

An invariable result, young men will agree, of putting on a new pair of grey trousers is that the pullover is immediately seen to be beyond repair. The elasticity of the ribbing has gone, almost overnight, causing a bagginess at the waist and a curling up, in places to a hideous degree, of the lower edges. Stitches have pulled, and marked fading of the neckband seems to have set in. The thing resembles a discoloured sack, except that, being open at both ends, it could not even be used for holding seed potatoes. If any doubt of its unserviceability remains, it can be ripped off, the hands inserted into one of the arm-



Reg. Forster

"Your watch bas stopped-what's the time by mine?"

holes and the strength of the fabric tested by a sudden savage wrenching movement of the arms. Some modern writers will tell you that a second pull may be necessary to make a job of it, but for myself I do not believe that the young man of to-day is any less fit and determined than we of an older generation used to be.

A new pullover is, indeed, so essential a corollary of a new pair of grey flannels that, were I in the outfitting business, I should not hesitate to sell them together. "West of England Worsteds," I should write on my display-cards ("Flannels" being, I believe, a misnomer), "with Detachable Corollary—35s. With two corollaries, 48s. 6d." There would be a reduction, implied at least, for quantity.

My prices, it will be urged, need revision in the light of present-day conditions. I do not care about this. I am living unashamedly in the past—having no desire to visualize myself as an outfitter in the light of present-day conditions. Grey trousers, by no means to be sneezed at, could be had for a guinea in the golden days, while for thirty shillings you could get a pair so smooth and shapely, so set about with pleats and pockets, so self-supporting and snugly fitting at the waist, that many a young man turned red with simple pleasure in the fitting room and took himself off, still wearing them, to the gramophone shop to buy "Tea for Two"—with "No, No, Nanette" on the back, 3s. Pullovers, in shades of unbelievable beauty, cost something well under a pound.

It does seem to me a most monstrous thing that young men of to-day, who cannot live in the past, should be robbed by high prices of the precious annual satisfaction of new flannels at Easter. 95s. is the sort of nonsense I see stuck up in the windows of far from West End shops; we used to get a secondhand car for that in my day. As Chancellor of the Exchequer (though I would rather be in the outfitting business, in the light of any conditions whatsoever) I should very soon see to it that certain essential items of clothing were available at a reduction of sixty-six and two-thirds per cent. to customers between the ages of twenty and twenty-four. Half the psychiatrists (who cannot recognize a baggy knee complex, anyway, when they see one) would be out of a job in no time. Of course I shall be told, as I always am told when I suggest a humane and generous reform, that the system would be open to abuse. Fathers, people will say, would not scruple to send their sons out to buy grey trousers for them. Well, I can deal faithfully with that one. It simply reveals an utter ignorance of the whole tragedy of fathers, and middleaged men generally, vis-à-vis grey flannel trousers.

The truth is that after a certain age new flannels simply do not have the same effect on the wearer. They show up the old pullover, certainly; but the purchase of a new one only exacerbates the trouble. The combination, eagerly conned over in the looking-glass, fails to exhilarate. On the contrary, by some inexorable law of nature, it serves only to draw attention to the thinning hair, the lines under the eyes, the slightly swelling middle. There is a spurious air, as of an ageing actor playing the juvenile lead. And to go further, to complete the outfit by buying a new sports coat, is to run a grave risk of looking like a broadminded clergyman on holiday—and nobody, least of all a broadminded clergyman, wants to look like that.

It is for this reason, sorry though I am for the young men deprived this Eastertide of their rightful heritage, I am even sorrier for their elders—for those who stand, like me, on a bed of leaf-mould, clad in perpetuity in indescribable pantaloons.

H. F. E.



THE MAN WITH A LOAD OF MISCHIEF



"Still annoyed with me, sweetheart?"

H. J.'s Belles-Lettres

Thas been slowly dawning on me that my literary experience is patchy until I have mastered fiction about Things Thespian, a phrase I use only because my wife says it puts her teeth on edge and while such is the case she cannot talk. Stand by then for a Tale of Mummers, just redolent of the footlights and very copyright.

Charles Elwyn was the idol of fashionable London. Frequently whole pages of dialogue were lost in the applause that greeted his inimitable lighting of a cigarette or the whimsical shrug with which he stole the scene from the leading lady. In his dressing-room, formerly the foyer, were signed photographs of the great ones of the earth—of crowned heads in crowns, belted earls in belts and mitred abbots in mitres. The illustrated papers were continually featuring his country estate with its private tobacco plantation and hopfield, his town flat with a diving-board in every bathroom, his yacht which had stained glass in the portholes. Such was the man as the world knew him; but behind the mask was another man, one ravaged by a secret knowledge he might never share. He knew he could not act.

He had often tried, watching himself in his bedroom mirror, with a manual of the art propped up before him. He had taken postal courses in an assumed name and watched his understudy closely at rehearsals. Somehow nothing seemed of even negligible avail. The glitter of his personality was sufficient to hide the truth from his public, who were prepared to believe that acting was anything he happened to do on the stage. Dramatists provided vehicles that put no strain on the male lead. But Charles himself had known the truth for many years, ever since at a smoking-concert his imitation of Wilkie Bard had been taken for Wilson Barrett. It was his constant fear that sooner or later others would know too.

Ambrose and Amber had been running some five years when one night Charles was handed a letter during Act One. His command of the audience was so perfect that he lived a good deal of his private life on the stage, making hearty meals, being manicured and doing the exercises that kept him the man he had been for so long. Waving to the other characters to keep the dialogue going, he tore open the note and with curdling blood read the anonymous message, "Elwyn, you are a ham." The truth was out at last. He staggered, puzzling his loyal fans, who were uncertain whether he was about to embark on a tap-dance or a death scene. Stricken, he expedited the interval, and as he sat making up for the next act, as he touched up the quizzical wrinkles round his eyes, polished his gold tooth and ironed his grey hair, he anxiously faced the future. He could no longer postpone being coached.

It was one in the morning before sleep came to those weary lids, and scarce ten before that fevered brain resumed its turmoil. Even the news that the Athenæum, to which he had belonged for years, had expelled him and re-elected him under Rule II did not abate his gloom. All through the matinée he waited for another message from the outside world, and when it did not come breathed again, a long suspiration that gained him a separate round of applause. For a heedless hour he decided to carry on as he was; but his fear was too deep-seated, too well-founded, to allow of delay. At the first opportunity he made his way to an address in Camberwell discovered by his dog-like-devoted dresser. In the converted drawing-room of a School of Music, Dancing and Dramatic Art, where several tiny tots dressed as fairies were practising the tango, he gave his name as Waldron Cooper-Hepplewhite, to escape the prying tongues of gossip, and paid the necessary fees in advance...

For month after month he plodded away at elocution, posture, gesture, fencing, character creation and audience control. His West End following began to waver and dwindle as he tried to apply what he learned; but devotion to Art held him in its unremunerative grip. In the School's Christmas play he was grudgingly given the part of Rosencrantz in an abbreviated version of Hamlet, doubling it at the matinée with Guildenstern. As he grew in seniority he pressed his claim to the lead and at the end of his third year his ambition was achieved: he was to be Macbeth.

Charles worked as he had never worked before. He not only learned every line of the part but studied the appendices in his copy of the play. He could have told you off-hand what Shakespeare owed to Holinshed, how many examples of the Ethic Dative the play contained, and where the normally iambic rhythm was enriched and variegated with trochees. To give himself ample time to prepare, he interrupted the run of Ambrose and Amber for a fortnight, giving out that he was taking a rest by cruising in remote waters with two peers. Actually, however, he was in furnished rooms in Camberwell slaving his heart out in preparation.

The long-awaited night came at length. Indeed, had it not done so, there would have been cause for comment. The Temperance Drill Hall was packed with parents and friends, who sat agog on the backless benches. Back-stage, the Ballet of Witches, the duettists who were to perform "It was a Lover and his Lass," introduced to give them practice in synchronization, and the elocutionary quartet who were to conclude the proceedings with a rendering of "The Seven Ages of Man," together with the rest of the cast bobbed about agitatedly. But in the whole green-room none was more agitated than Macbelh.

During the earlier scenes all went well. Charles remembered his lines and facial expressions. He came on and off the stage at the right time and never forgot to express interest while other characters were speaking. His dresser, the only friend he had dared to invite, could hear every word from his seat in the back row, and followed the plot without difficulty and, in parts, with interest.

It was during the important scene of Duncan's murder that disaster made itself felt. Charles's nerves were on edge. The strain had been severe and nature took her toll. At the moment the knocking on the door interrupted the murderous colloquy, an inattentive or overwrought member of the audience clapped. A lifetime of habit asserted itself. The noise of palm striking palm momentarily carried Charles back to his triumphs in Shaftesbury Avenue. "Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I wouldst thou couldst!" he said with a grin of impish challenge, and smoothed his hair rhythmically with an elegant hand.

Expelled with ignominy from his Alma Mater, he returned

to the resumed run of Ambrose and Amber broken in spirit and beyond fear of discovery. Soon word went round the West End that he was back in his usual form and the ticket agencies did what was possible to balm his wounded pride.

Hunger

AKE away your rhumba! I cried, Take away your jazz and your jive! These leave the hungry heart hungry, Upon these the soul cannot thrive.

Bring to me Bach and Beethoven,
Bring me the classics for a change,
Or even a bit by Bartok
Be it ever so passing strange.

I languish for want of music!
Real music, good music, I said,
They brought me a Brahms Concerto
And my hungering heart was fed.

The odd thing was, in the middle, I hungered as never before For the sultry rhythmic beating Of that Rajah from Mogador.

I yearned in the andantino
For Dinah and Frankie and Bing,
Oh, shame on my restless spirit
That is hungry for everything! V. G.



51665

"Could you cut me off a bit to show my husband just about enough to make a frock?"

Second-Hand Feet

HE salesman at the first shop accepted his fate with a sort of dumb resignation. He seemed to have had some kind of premonition of what was coming to him, for his manner as he received me was one of dejected foreknowledge of some undeserved misfortune. He produced his wares with the listless air of a man performing a pointless but unavoidable ritual, and mechanically enumerated their virtues. For the sake of appearances he put one or two of them on to my right foot and laced them up. Then he took them off again without speaking.

There was one shoe that almost fitted in some places, and I suggested half-heartedly that we might try its mate on the left foot. He shook his head silently. I think he had a feeling that if he took my left foot out of its present covering he might never get it back again, and then he would have me on his hands for the rest of his life, or at any rate until he qualified for his pension. In the end I put on my right shoe and left him sitting glassy-eyed

among the debris. After I had walked about for a while I found myself outside an establishment whose advertisements, I remembered, boasted that they could supply anyone with a pair of shoes from stock that would be a perfect fit. I hesitated a little before entering, for I had no desire to hold a respectable firm up to ridicule, but eventually I decided that there could be no harm in enlarging their experience a little. I would just walk in, take the manager into a secluded corner, and direct his attention to my feet; and then I could go home and send my old shoes to be repaired again.

The man who met me inside the door did not look like the manager; he conveyed rather the impression that he was a large shareholder in the concern who had been moved by curiosity to come down and have a look at one of the shops. It was rather a surprise to find that he had removed my right shoe, but he seemed to take it as a matter of course. He propped my foot on a sort of inclined plane fitted with sliding gadgets and took a good look at it, backing away a little to get it in perspective. Then he manipulated the apparatus and read off the answer on two scales marked in centimetres, or it may have been decibels. Even then his brow remained unruffled.

"I usually take size nine," I muttered, feeling it was necessary to say something.

He did not actually smile, but the corners of his mouth twitched ever so slightly.

"Now your foot," he said (I noticed that his gaze kept straying back to it), "is unusually long and narrow. Unusually long and narrow."
"This one is." I said.

"What I should really like to do," he said in a burst of confidence, "would be to give you a size ten, narrow fitting. Do you find that your socks wear out at the toes?"

It was quite uncanny that he should have divined it, but it was perfectly true. My socks do wear out at the toes.

"That is because you have been wearing a short shoe," he said. He did not seem angry at my past folly, only a little pitying, and anxious to put me on the right path. He produced a shoe that I could see at a glance was unusually long and narrow and inserted my foot into it. I stood up and limped about the floor.

"It feels rather tight across here," I

He pounced on it like a panther. "Ah!" he said, squeezing the place where it hurt most. "You see, when you wear a short shoe the big toe tends to curl itself sideways, and that impairs the lubrication of the joint. Then, of

course, the joint swells. And we get what we call a bunion." He pressed it again. Whatever might be thought of his argument, there was no doubt that his final conclusion was correct.

"What you need," he said, contracting his brows slightly, "is a narrow fitting with extra width across the metatarsal arch. There are three arches in the foot," he went on, speaking rather rapidly, "one below the instep, one at the base of the toes, and one at the metatarsals. Try this one on, will you?"

I tried it on.

"No," he said, getting up and walking about in a circle. "No. Let me see —perhaps a wide-fitting nine-and-ahalf."

The wide-fitting nine-and-a-half went on quite easily, and in a flash he had whipped off my left shoe and replaced it with the fellow of the one on my right foot. He laced them up, and I hobbled to and fro for a while.

hobbled to and fro for a while.
"Does your left foot," he said, seeming to speak with difficulty, "cause you pain?"

"In this shoe it does," I said.

He helped me back to the chair and took off the left shoe. Then he took off the right shoe. I saw his eyes swiveling from one foot to the other with frightful rapidity.

"I have a corn on my left foot at present," I said, trying to make it easy for him

for him.

"A pad of toughened skin," he said quickly, "developed by the foot trying to protect a tender joint. The tenderness is due to wearing a badly-fitting shoe." But his tone lacked conviction.

"Well——" I murmured.
"What I should really like to do," he said, showing the whites of his eyeballs, "is to give you a narrow-fitting, square-toed, slightly off-centre tenand-a-half with a very roomy instep."
His breathing was painful to listen to.

His breathing was painful to listen to.
"But, perhaps," I suggested, "you haven't one in stock at present?"

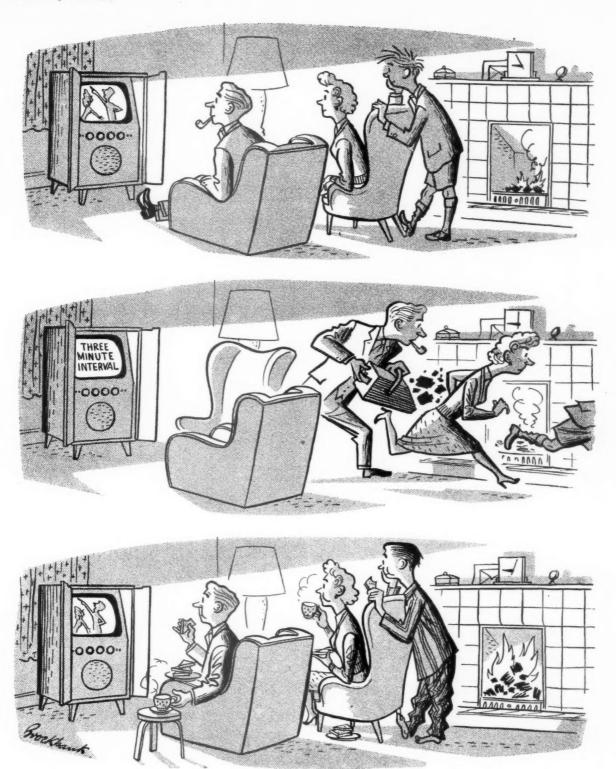
With a convulsive effort he wrenched his gaze from my feet and looked me squarely in the eye. "No," he said, dabbing his lips with a handkerchief, "I haven't."

So I left him.

"Look!" said the daughter of the house next morning at breakfast, depositing her brother in his high chair and pointing to his pedal extremities, which were encased in yellow woollen gloves. "John's got second-hand feet!"

"It's hereditary," I said.
G. D. R. D.







"It was all a dreadful mistake, Captain Jones— Rex thought it was the postman."

Aunt Tabitha's Methods, if Any

HY my Aunt Tabitha should have decided that we were all in the last chapter of a detective story it is far too laborious for me to imagine; but there we all seemed to be, and of course she had cast herself for the rôle of the complacently explanatory investigator.

It emerged after a little that the guilty party had already been arrested, which relieved us somewhat.

"Do you realize who it was?" asked Aunt Tabitha, rummaging for her italics. "It was Yves Dropp. And that could only mean one thing. He was over here."

Her thin uncle's lip curled. "Quite apart from the transparency of the manœuvre to introduce your pun, if

Her thin uncle's lip curled. "Quite apart from the transparency of the manœuvre to introduce your pun, if such it may be called without loathsome flattery," he said, "I challenge your assertion that it could only mean one thing. Nothing can only mean one thing. If it means one thing to you, the odds are seven to four that it means something else to the average Bessarabian metallurgist."

One of Aunt Tabitha's great-grandfathers was heard to observe that the boy was trying too hard. "So painstakingly bizarre an example," he declared, sniffing, "indicates that the bottom of the barrel is being scraped before the surface has even been scratched."

"Which takes some doing, mind you," said Aunt

Tabitha's fat uncle, being fair.

"Meanwhile," Aunt Tabitha pressed on, unmoved, "what of Sybil Aviation? I took particular note of what the policeman said to her when he first appeared at the scene of the crime."

"If he didn't say 'This is a bad business' we aren't in a

detective story," said her thin uncle.

Aunt Tabitha waved a hand (someone was going past).
"No," she said, "I refer to his greeting. He said 'Hullo,' you see. He didn't say 'Goodbye.'"

you see. He didn't say 'Goodbye.'"

"Bless my soul, that's a shrewd point," said another great-grandfather. "If he'd said 'Goodbye'——"

"Exactly," said Aunt Tabitha. "If he'd said 'Goodbye' he wouldn't have been coming."

"You mean—"
"Yes. He'd——"

"—have——," "—been——,

"-going."

Both collapsed into chairs, breathing hard. Only the absence of a towel prevented me from fanning them with it. Involuntarily I cocked an ear for an inter-round summing-up by Mr. W. Barrington Dalby.

Aunt Tabitha's thin uncle stared for a moment at her prostrate form and then asked in a sinister tone "Does it strike you that there is something not quite natural about the way she is lying?"

the way she is lying?"

"If I understand you wrongly, and I hope I do," said Aunt Tabitha warmly, "don't give us any of that first-chapter stuff here. This is the explanation, the dénouement, as last a chapter as there ever was." She rose, with a slight cracking of joints, and tapped her thin uncle on the chest. "If you have any sense of what is fitting you will slink away. We shall catch a glimpse of your eyes, and there will be no mistaking the expression in them. Fear."

All her thin uncle said to this was "Pooh!" but her great-great-aunt Maud was moved to observe that it was always possible to mistake an expression. "I well remember," she piped, "Mr. Pitt's telling me once how he was misled by the look in Mr. Fox's eyes into concluding that Mr. Fox was about to heap an encomium. What was his confusion a few moments later, when the encomium was heaped not by Mr. Fox but by Mr. Burke!"

Aunt Tabitha resumed her narrative stance and her exposition, staring most hopefully at those of us who had not hitherto managed to interrupt. Her thin uncle sank into a chair, biding his time (or whatever that thing is).

Aunt Tabitha said "Remember that the policeman asked Sybil Aviation what she was looking at, and she replied 'Sky.' Now—why sky?"
"Why sky, huh?" said her fat uncle out of the side of

"Why sky, huh?" said her fat uncle out of the side of his mouth, looking with menace at our American cousin. But he, as usual, was absorbed in the magazines sent to him from home, and refused to look up from the advertisements full of lovely food and lovely women.

"It was obvious," Aunt Tabitha proceeded complacently,

"It was obvious," Aunt Tabitha proceeded complacently, "that she was keeping something back. And I very soon realized what that something was. The body was not that of Joe Metaphor at all. It was that of Joe Badinage."

"This was growing interesting," said one of the other cousins, pat to his cue. Her thin uncle challenged his choice of adjective, and they went off into a corner to argue. We heard them hissing at intervals, like people watching a film of the Grand National.

"The more he thought," said Aunt Tabitha, referring apparently to the policeman, "the more dissatisfied he grew. But suddenly—bang! How could we have been so stupid? The whole thing became clear. The rest," she concluded modestly, "you know."

The pause seemed to be meant for congratulation, but few of us did anything but cough.

"From then on," Aunt Tabitha said, "that policeman never looked back. I took him under my wing."
Her thin uncle said "Wasn't it dark!" R. M.



"Quite frankly, Mrs. Johnson, your anxiety neurosis has me worried."

Still Further Musings

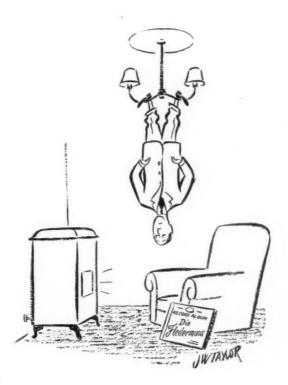
O-DAY I should like my readers, if they do not mind working on a very small scale, to muse on the presence in life of those little bits of china decorated with coats of arms; for here, I think, we have an interesting if modest branch of art. One interesting thing about it is that all of us used to keep absolutely typical examples on our early mantelpieces but have even less idea than usual where they have gone to; another, that all examples are absolutely typical, for the rules are as rigid as those governing macaroons. There are two main shapes, a jug and a two-handled mug, and several others which we should recognize as classic if we saw them; the regulation size is small enough to hold the least enthusiastic bunch of primroses, with as much water as will spill or get dried up: and the regulation colour is cream, with a little gutter of dried dirt round the bottom of the inside. But the chief feature is of course the coat of arms. Varying according to the holiday town the mug or jug commemorates if facing the right way, this is a bright, closely-packed affair boldly outlined in black and finished off with a motto expressing keenness in Latin; and it is typical of visitors being shown such china that they round off their appreciation by extending it to the coat of arms-bringing the jug closer to the eyes and saying something a little more intelligent than "Fancy!"—and by inwardly having a stab at the Latin. I was suggesting that no one hangs on to this kind of china for more than a very few years, which is another way of saying that many readers are by now indignantly conscious of some cracked treasure parked among the egg cups.

THIS seems the place to say something about heraldry in general, a science of which ignorance and queer French are the keynotes. The word heraldry comes from the word herald, or the other way round, and the public knows a herald as a figure wearing an embroidered and belted sandwich-board with a kind of inverted dog-bowl for a hat, and heralding something by blowing a trumpet so long and thin as no doubt to have a name of its own. The connection between this figure and coats of arms is not so

much obscure as historical, or there if you read it up, and even the most general public can do something to fill the gap by thinking of knights in armour. Heraldry itself may be summed up briefly and inaccurately as the science of giving difficult but obviously correct names to the tiny animals, plants, commas depicting ermine and diagonal stripes which are its raw material, and when I mention gules and argent I have caught up with what my readers were thinking. Before I finish with the subject of heraldry I must mention the crested envelope and remind my readers how impressive they feel when they get one, though it may only mean that a friend is using hotel notepaper.

MUSING in another direction, we may be led by the little china jugs of the past to the toys we have either kept or lost and thence to the names people give woolly animals and other things, if I can do so without being overwhimsical. It is almost impossible, for example, to call a car anything at all without being whimsical, but this does not stop nearly every car being called something that needs a cheery footnote to make it obvious. Furniture often gets names which are not so much whimsical as identifications which have stuck; human nature has found that at an over-populated meal it is easier to ask someone else to fetch The Heavy Chair than to describe it or fetch it yourself. Woolly animals are named more deliberately but often in rather a hurry, there being an idea that the more inarticulate owners of woolly animals would prefer an extempore suggestion that is good enough to something brilliant worked up at leisure. Toy-owners, of course, do not stay inarticulate for long, and the average toy-cupboard is so rich in etymology, if that is the word for how things come to be called what they are, as to give anyone turning it out a complacent sense of history in the making.

ANDE





"I may be only a Pekinese over here, but it may surprise you to know that in my own country I was a St. Bernard."

My Neighbour's Car

ONSIDERING that the underdog is the traditional object of any good Briton's sympathies, it is surprising that nothing has been done all these years for the man who rides to town and back in his neighbour's car. If ever there was an underdog he is it, and yet his rights remain undefined, his needs unconsidered, his gloves (which he left in a little hole in the dashboard) unreturned. I ought to know, for I am just such an underdog myself.

I will tell you what I am barking about. If my neighbour invites me to his house to see a television programme, as he frequently does, he does not dream of filling about half the room with boxes of tomato plants or cans of paint and then telling me to keep my eye on them and see that they don't fall over. He does not seat him self in the only available chair, informing me that I do not mind, but the

other one is being repaired, and then make a great business of finding some oily rags for me to sit on. He does not become offended if I criticize his operation of the set. He does not say, halfway through the programme, "Well, I've got to call round at Soandso's, I expect I shall have to wait, you might as well get out now." In a word, he behaves like a man and not a motorist, a host and not a Hottentot. How different he is in his car!

From the first thing in the morning, when I take his car out of the garage and tootle a little on the horn to let him know that he has no time for breakfast, to the last thing at night, when he refuses to wait outside the public library on the ground that he will be late for dinner, my neighbour adopts a lordly and impatient attitude towards me. One would never guess, from the way he treats me, that there are other people living in the street

with cars just as available as his, and that I have been trying to get to know them for some time. He seems to think that if it were not for him I should remain forever fixed in one spot like a sea-anemone. He acts as if he were running some kind of Government monopoly.

He does not even try to give an impression of efficiency. The condition of the car is appalling. As often as not our springs need repairing or our window is jammed, but all he has to offer on these occasions is a cheery laugh. The other day when a nail entered our tyre he openly admitted that our spare was lying punctured in the garage. I was delayed over half an hour that morning, and his laughter rang most unpleasantly in my ears.

It is obvious that some drastic action on my part is called for, but the trouble is that the man is impervious to sarcasm. The good-natured groan with which I have taken to accepting his offer of a lift has no effect whatever. The best I have been able to do is to persuade him to make a careful note of any repairs I specify, so that at least he will not be able to plead forgetfulness when next I tax him with his lack of good citizenship. Now, if I could only get some co-operation among the other liftees in the neighbourhood we could take a really strong line and compel our neighbours to keep their cars at a reasonable peak of efficiency.

But it is my experience that liftees are a spineless lot. The average man who leaves his office in the evening to find his neighbour's ear parked outside and his neighbour leaning out and offering him a lift seems incapable of preserving the critical spirit. He does not stop and make sure that everything is in working order and that the man's driving licence has not been endorsed—not he. Tired out after a hard day's work, he climbs in and gratefully sinks back into the oily rags with a sigh. "Thanks very much, old man," he says humbly. How can you instil any spirit into people like that?

Liftees will be well aware that I

Liftees will be well aware that I have only touched on a tithe of their problems here, but before I close this article I should like to make it clear that of course we should not be in this embarrassing and humiliating position if cars were not so jolly expensive and hard to come by nowadays. If one could just walk round to the nearest dealer and get hold of a new car everything would be all right, but at present one has to put one's name on a list and wait, and meanwhile get a lift somewhere. I mean, I've put my neighbour's name down on the list of course, but in the meantime what can I do?

Regrets

"The Kugomba Frontier Force ex-Officers are holding their annual dinner at the Babylon Hotel next Wednesday, and have invited me to be their guest of honour. Judging by last year's effort the dinner will be well worth the seventeen-and-six which they charge the common herd for admission, and as I shall get a free ticket and as much wine as I can drink and with any luck a large cigar from the chairman, it seems an occasion not to be missed."

I nodded. Personally, I am rarely asked by any organization to be a guest of honour, but it has happened once or twice when they could not get anyone else, and life has few better things to offer than a free meal, free wine, and the privilege of boring a large gathering with a long speech.

"The trouble is," Sympson went on, "that the East Reddington Conservative Association are holding a dinner on the same night, and they have also asked me, as their prospective Parliamentary Candidate, to be their guest of honour. Our chairman is the proprietor of the hotel where the feast is being held, and the refreshment, both solid and liquid, is certain to be of the highest order. It is a cruel blow of Fate that these two dinners should both be on the same night, since there are so many nights when I dine in lonely solitude in my bachelor flat off a tin of soup or possibly, in my wilder moods, off spaghetti and tomato sauce on toast.

I suggested he should toss up for it. "No," he said. "I have decided to write two letters of apology, one to the Kugomba Frontier Force and one to the East Reddington Conservative Association, and when I have completed both letters I shall post the one that seems to me most convincing and tear the other up. To the East Reddington Conservative Association I shall explain that although I would much sooner attend their dinner, I feel that I must give priority to my comrades of the war. I shall describe the blood and toil which I suffered alongside the brave officers of the Kugomba Frontier Force, the long treks through waterless desert, the privations that we underwent, such as being allowed a bottle of beer only once a fortnight. I think I can write a letter that will bring tears to the eyes of every East Reddington Conservative when it is read out at their dinner.'

I agreed that this letter seemed to

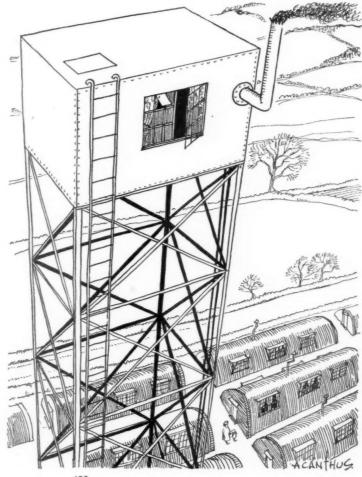
offer great scope for Sympson's literary talent.

"It will," said Sympson, complacently, "but so will my letter to the Kugomba Frontier Force. I shall write of the happy days of our old comradeship together, and say how much I would have enjoyed being their guest of honour. Then I shall add that I feel it a stern duty to take the harder path and dine with the East Reddington Conservatives, because only by going full-pelt to get into Parliament can I help to make a land fit for ex-officers of the Kugomba Frontier Force to live in. When this letter is read out at their dinner I feel sure that all the officers will be deeply impressed. They will recall my stern devotion to duty when I was one of them, and tears will well up into their eyes as they realize that I have not changed.'

He put a bit of paper into his typewriter and started on the first letter, so I withdrew. Both letters sounded very promising as he described them, and I wondered which he would eventually send.

Happening to pass his house on the Wednesday of the dinners I was surprised to see a light burning. I knocked at the door, and when I opened it he beckoned me to follow him into his little kitchen. Some toast was burning on the grill and a mess of spaghetti was heaving rather uncomfortably in a saucepan.

"Literary ability is not always an advantage," he said gloomily. "I wrote two of the most moving letters I have ever constructed in my life. Both made me sob like a little child. Each was too good for destruction, so I posted them both." D. H. B.





". . . and always, I feel that I'm an awful bore."

The Elements of Optimism

T can now be revealed that not one of the innumerable economists who opened up as prophets with such éclat five years ago has lived to see his predictions come true. This does not mean, of course, that we have suddenly become bereft of economists; far from it. There is no cause for alarm. Economists are nothing if not staunch to their calling and ideals. Every gap in the front rank has been filled instantly: every false forecast has been taken over, dusted and renewed. Some day, no doubt, the sellers' market really will collapse and give way to a buyers' market, and then everything will be just fine for them. "What did we tell you?" they'll say. "It was obviously only a matter of time.'

The first rumoured predictions of a crack in the sellers' market, it will be remembered, came in April 1945, when Professor Titchbank stole a march on his colleagues by getting the newspapers to print a letter containing these words:

"While it would be pure folly to venture predictions at this stage there can be no harm (and there may even be some good) in saying that when the sellers' market is established, as it soon will be, it will be followed at length by a buyers' market."

This statement upset the economists. They accused Titchbank of unprofessional and unethical conduct, of spoiling the market, dumping, and sweated necromancy. They cut off his weekly supply of statistical bulletins (and it is no joke, I can tell you, trying to cope with crises without all the relevant dirt, as they say) and made his name mud from one end of Queen Anne's Gate to the other.

Before May was out, however, Titchbank's historic prediction had been followed by at least a score of imitations. They were poor stuff really; obviously thrown together in a hurry and tricked up to look like the real thing. Mougall said:

"The year 1946 will see the end of

the vendors' market and the return of a condition of intense competition throughout the world. I propose to call this condition a purchasers' mart." Lerrington said:

"... cannot now be regarded as an unconfirmed hypothesis that a consumers' forum will have replaced the approaching dealers' market by the spring of next year."

By midsummer 1947 it had become reasonably certain that the sellers' market had not cracked up during 1946 and the economists were getting flustered. Some of them—the elders who couldn't afford to wait and the youth element in the movement which had its bubble reputation to make—switched over from the Titchbank line and began a fairly profitable series of predictions dealing with inflation and disinflation. Others went in for short-term, almost day-to-day prognostications about the course of American business. Farrisea and Coppling and many of their admirers contented

themselves with quick bursts of prediction aimed at the Titchbank brigade. "It is now quite certain," wrote Coppling, "that there will be no great change in the sellers' market before November 30th."

During 1948 the pace grew hotter. By now it was obvious that immense prestige would accrue to the prophet whose forebodings were on the mark, and every date in the calendar was canvassed and claimed over and over again. In June the National Union of Economists and Statisticians met to consider a situation that was rapidly becoming farcical, and finally it was decided to cancel existing claims and to redistribute all dates in the next three years as fairly as possible. Applications from bona fide economists were invited and an allotment was made. As a very junior member I got only one share in the stakes—May 3rd, 1950

Now I am not making these sensational disclosures merely to create a sensation or to work in a bit of publicity for my May 3rd, 1950. I want to prove that the economists as a movement deserve well of their country and of public opinion. I want to correct the popular misconception that the economist is a man who puts his work first and the reward second. What happens when we are told that rationing is to end very shortly? We can ignore the handful of people who will rush to use up their coupons and points, and state as a fact that the public suddenly stops joking about shirt-cuffs and lollipops, feels vaguely frustrated, and keeps right away from the clothiers' and the sweet-shops. What happens, then, when the economists incessantly predict an end of the sellers' market? Theoretically, I suppose, there should be a world-wide cancellation of orders, a stiffening of sales competition and a severe hardening of the arteries of trade. But, no! The fact that the world now recognizes the economist as only human and therefore one hundred per cent. fallible produces an entirely opposite effect. People are convinced that the sellers' market has come to stay: they continue to buy British in the firm belief that if they don't someone else will.

It is almost as if the economists had remained silent. And anyone with a grain of imagination can realize what incalculable benefits that would mean. I ask you, therefore, to salute our British economists for their great work in the recovery programme and invite you meanwhile to keep that date—May 3rd, 1950—very clearly in mind. The prophet, this time, ladies and gentlemen, is . . . Hop





"What's up with you lately, old chap-is it some girl?"

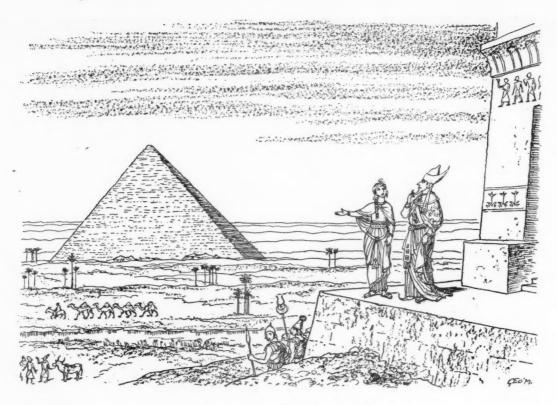
The Modern Trend

A Personal Complaint

HE world awakes each bitter dawn to see Misgotten monsters, lurid progeny Of Anarchy and Disbelief, but then She nods her head and goes to sleep again. And while she sleeps the Arts make wondrous haste To flaunt themselves in dress devoid of taste; A picture enters clad in battling hues, Bold greens, audacious reds and ghastly blues. Dismembered bodies line offenceless shelves, And plaintive fiddles softly play themselves. Here shapeless masses of dull marble rise Disguised as statues to confound the eyes; And Perfect Truth, the object of all Art, Becomes subjected to its lesser part Impression, advocate of those who flout Tradition's laws and throw perspective out. A crash is heard, and Music tumbles in Preceded by a syncopatic din Of tones and semi-tones, rammed rudely home Without the aid of skill or metronome Into the blistered ear, which then vibrates Primeval songs of savage loves and hates.

And orchestras, designed for higher feats, Leave Mozart to be whistled on the streets, While they in solemn discord will prepare To flourish with tone poems everywhere. At length upon a couch, too weak to rise Comes Poetry, of man the chiefest prize. No more she sings, but greatest of all woes, She helpless lies all muffled up in prose. Her anxious surgeons pass long nights and days Competing to prescribe the lowest phrase; Weak stimulants, commenced with panegyric, Dissolved in cant and sentimental lyric, And all their draughts of volatile free verse Effect no cure, but make the patient worse. Redoubled groans of pained confusion rise, Until at last, delirious, she dies. And when the world shakes off her heavy sleep, To judge with open eyes, and more, to keep Fair company with Reason and with Truth, The constant guardians of her fickle youth, Pure Art distilled and chastened will then haste To swear her vows before the throne of Taste.





"Must it stay just there? It ruins the view."

Scythe No More, Ladies

ERRIE BOARD: KEEP OUT, said a large green notice-board; SCYTHE SQUADS EXERCISING.
The Bishops Weevil sector, in common with all the scheduled Merrie Areas, was seething with activity. There had been reports of tourist concentrations at various points along the Connecticut coast, awaiting favourable weather, and T Day might be upon us any fine morning.

i'Is there time to finish our game of bowls?' Marchpane had asked. Not, I had to tell him, the way he played. Bowls was now a scheduled Merrie Sport in the hands of properly instructed and licensed teams, and it was inadvisable for amateurs to be seen dabbling at it, especially when there was work to be done. Petulantly Marchpane sent his last wood hurtling amid his favourite bed of plastic tulips, and we hurried on duty.

Our passes were carefully checked by large, morose men in green uniforms;

the Scythe Squads were still on the secret list, and none of us quite knew how far their intensive training had got. We were soon to find out. "Number Two Squad," rapped a group leader, "sharpen—scythes!"

Marchpane winced. "There'll be trouble about that," he remarked. "The correct order is 'whet.'"

But Marchpane had troubles of his own. As Chief Sector Bard he had been ordered to produce an Official Scything Song in time for the full-scale Merrie Exercises which would clearly be held any day now, and he did not seem to have got very far with it. He looked at me speculatively, worrying the end of his pencil. "Dish?" he murmured. "Wish? Pish?"

I glanced at the notebook he was clutching and saw what he was after. He had produced, so far, just one line. "Swish, swish, swish," was what he

had written.

"I see what you mean," I said as

encouragingly as possible. "A promising start, but it needs developing Fish?"

He shook his head and sank into creative gloom. All over the field the sharpening drill went on. "The trouble," Marchpane observed at length, "is the lack of any nourishing background of general scythe literature. One has to start, as it were, from scratch."

This seemed a considerable understatement, it occurred to me as I watched the Merrie First-Aid Units rushing to bandage the fingers and arms of over-eager whetters. All I could think of to help, off-hand, were a couple of lines from Goldsmith which went something like this: "The scythe that rends thy constant heart Shall break thy Edwin's too." Marchpane considered this politely but it did not appear to start anything.

Now the squads were moving into position. At the far end of the field a

massed band of fifes and tabors broke into what might have been a version of "Greensleeves." It sounded plaintive and a little eerie, like background music to a psychological film. The Chief Sector Controller, a superbly bronzed official, made violent gestures; and in some panic the majority of the fifes began to play "My Bonny Lies Over the Ocean." The C.S.C. did not seem any more pleased about this. Marchpane's guess was that the number was ambiguous: they should have specified which ocean. The Consort of Viols and the Cacophony of Rebecs were just beginning to join in when a great shout rose from the spectators. "They're off!"

The first of the Scythe Squads had

gone into action.

Volunteers all—golfers, hockey-players, simple barbers and the like—trained in next to no time in the National Scythe Schools, they made a brave show; their blades flashed in the sun, scything everything in sight. Grass, hedges, barriers, small trees, tent ropes—nothing could stand before them. A parade of National Milkmaids, big healthy girls with complexions and three-legged stools, scattered and ran. A bardic flash came to Marchpane's eye as he watched, and his pencil leaped to its task.

His second line, when I dared to steal a glance at it, appeared to be "Swish, swish, swish," like the first, making six swishes to date. I began to wonder if this was quite the right job for him in a planned economy.

Suddenly he gripped my elbow. "That squad sweeping this way. It almost looks from here as if . . . They

are! Women!"

It was true. And what women! All over six feet, and bronzed right down to the chin. Most of them had adopted an orthodox hockey technique, but several were less conventional. One huge girl was hacking at things with the point. Another was swinging her scythe in great circles, shoulder high. Their commander seemed to have transfixed a large elm, and general control began to suffer. group of the Honourable Company of Yokels, busily applying their tan for the Grand March Past which was to follow, joined the Milkmaids in disorderly flight.

I was glancing round to ensure that our own line of retreat was open when Marchpane said loudly, "Scythe no more, ladies, scythe no more."

His eye challenged mine. I shook my head apologetically. This might be plain common sense, but clearly it was no roseate flush of any new poetic dawn. There was, however, no holding him. "One foot on sea," he went on, "and one on shore . . ."

I shuddered. It was not as bad as that. There were casualties, true; but most of the injuries we could see appeared superficial. Nothing was actually severed.

By now they were so near that we could see the rippling of their muscles and feel the wind from the great sweeping blades, except that of the squad commander which was still embedded in the elm. The field was by this time full of refugees and shrill with cries of alarm.

"Then scythe not so," chanted

Marchpane, "but let them go, And be you blithe and bonny, Converting all their sounds of woe Into hey nonny, nonny."

I let it go at that.

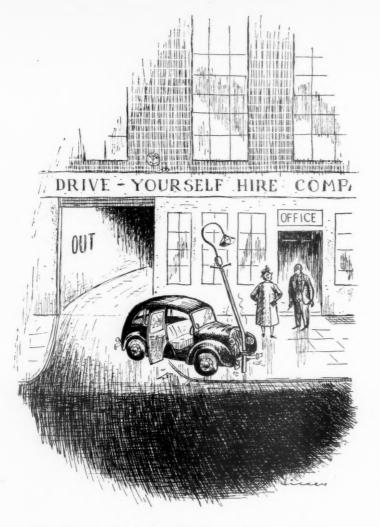
Great Expectorations

"The Ministry's statement said: 'The amount of plutonium produced is sufficient for investigating the chemical and chemical engineering problems which will be met in the large-scale handling of plutonium.

'Plutonium, which does not exist naturally in the earth, was first produced in quantity in 1942 in America, and being fissile (spittable), can be made to break up and give out great energy.'"—Daily paper.



"Pemberton's the most persuasive speaker I've ever met."



"I have no intention of paying for one instant more than the EXACT fifteen seconds I was driving."

Export and Import

OME, factory workers, come! To help us dine A hen clucked Danish, hawk-eyed Indian chief Speared salmon for our tins, we hope, a sheaf Of Yankee corn bowed down, contented kine Browsed in New Zealand hills, a southern vine Grew fat with currants, on a coral reef Palms grown for marg. rejoiced, and bully beef Was noble baron in the Argentine.

Columbus, Raleigh, Hawkins, Hudson, Drake, Green monstrous rollers pounding in their wake, From sea to farthest foreign sea pursued Globe-circling wonder-ways to find and shake The spreading continents that feed our brood. There goes the hungry buzzer. Work means food. C. C. P.

This Landlord

HIS morning when I came down to breakfast I found my landlord's legs sticking through the ceiling. All that was visible of him was a pair of seedy carpet slippers and two lengths of rather distasteful trousering. This is a new method of annoying the tenants, and I do not think I like it. This morning we had mostly plaster for breakfast and that is one reason why I am looking for some new digs. The way this landlord is carrying on the house is not fit to live in.

The first time I noticed anything peculiar about the man was the day the hot water geyser exploded. I had gone upstairs that day, as I usually do, to have a bath. I had already asked the landlord if I could have a bath because he does not like people having baths and has to be told about them first, and I was not anticipating any trouble provided that I kept the bath-water from overflowing on to the washing. As soon as I reached the top landing, however, I saw that I was not going to have a bath. Standing outside the bathroom door, instead of the usual five people waiting to get in, was the landford, surrounded by dense clouds of steam and giving every appearance of being in a nasty frame of mind. At first sight I thought he was producing the steam himself, but then I saw that the source of the trouble was two live jets proceeding from underneath the bathroom door, the whole giving the impression of one of the minor eruptions from Mount Etna. Now I am not one to stand around and gape, and thinking that the landlord had a sick fancy to play about with some steam (he does some funny things) I turned round and started back to my room to wait till he had finished. I did not get very far. Taking the intervening stairs in one bound, the landlord alighted beside me and demanded whether I knew the price of geyers. I have never pretended to know the price of geysers and the question came as something of a surprise. Fortunately I was not permitted to answer. Descending the stairs crabwise, the landlord began to explain that he had not had a new geyser put in for nothing, a statement which I was prepared to accept. Without waiting for me to comment he went on to describe the setting up and installation of a geyser until, by the time we reached the ground floor, I could if necessary have installed one myself. Happily my room is on the ground floor, so I side-stepped into it as we passed and locked the door. After a

threatening silence the landlord went back to the bathroom to brood.

That was the beginning. After that our relations grew worse. The landlord took to lying in wait for me as I went out and jumping the question of when I was going to pay the rent. After three weeks I found that the furniture in my room was slowly disappearing. I let one or two pieces go just to make sure and then branded the rest by boring two small holes into each on the underside of the wood. The other tenants got pretty sick of me in the next few days going up to their rooms and inverting all their furniture, but I beat the landlord and ended up with more furniture than I had to start with. I even reclaimed some of the landlord's own, which made him so mad that he set the dog on me, an ugly animal with protruding front teeth, but fortunately it did not bite. For a fortnight I lived in comparative security.

The climax came when the landlord discovered that my electric meter had been shorted out of circuit. I had gaily been using the electric fire for two months without realizing that the thing had been running on air, and I came in one day to find the landlord crouched in deep contemplation beside the meter. Thinking at first he was looking for mice I went down on all fours to see if I could help. I soon saw I was mistaken. Thrusting a long piece of flex under my nose as if it was Exhibit "A" at a murder trial, the landlord demanded whether I knew the penalties for defrauding the electricity company. I have always disliked people who open the conversation by asking cryptic questions, and I replied somewhat briskly that I did not. "Very well," said the landlord. "The police do, then." He seemed to expect a reply to this remark, so I waited for a moment and then suggested that the man upstairs might know as he was a lawyer. "In that case," said the landlord nastily, "you ought to get to know him better." At this point the meter, which had been simmering quietly for some minutes, blew up. There was an impressive white flash and tongues of flame began to edge round the carpet. The landlord, trying to give the impression of being an air-raid veteran (he spent the war in Vancouver), plunged headlong to the carpet and began threshing about like a salmon. It was some seconds before I realized that the reason for this odd behaviour was his trousers, which were burning nicely. I extinguished the flames with my shoe and retired to a distance to watch events. The landlord was not looking particularly pleased. Wisps of smoke were beginning to curl up from

the carpet and the meter looked as though it had had a direct hit. Slowly the landlord rose to his feet, smoulder-"I've had enough of this," he remarked, clutching hold of the lamp "Enough of what?" I inquired, edging behind the sofa. "You'll see," snapped the landlord, and flung out of the room. The next day I received a short note. "You are required to leave," it said. "Your room has been let to another tenant." transferred this to my next-door neighbour, who left without a murmur the same night, and the situation now is that the landlord and I are not speaking to each other. How it will all end I do not know. A few more of these stunts and I shall start losing my

The Old Focus at Home "The country with its perennial sunshine lens itself to all the year round photography."—S. African paper.

Ode to Elizabeth's Nose

YOU really have the nicest nose! And only think of all the shapes It might have been . . . the monstrous japes

Dame Nature plays . . . as when she

Cyrano's beak, or Ikey Mo's
Proboscis (Mark I*, Hebraic);
Durante's snout; the hook archaic
That Cæsar blew. She might—who
knows?—

Have formed it snub...but I suppose That Nature, after she had made
The rest of you, and had surveyed
Her handiwork and found it good,
To crown all, did the best she could—
And lo, the fairest nose that blows,
The envy of your friends and foes!
Tiptilted slightly, short and straight,
With nostrils arched and delicate...
Perfect to sneeze, or smell a rose...
Or snare a dozen Romeos!

You really have the nicest nose!



Is Your Daughter Really Necessary?

Y husband and I have recently been subjected to trial as by fire. We have been sifted as wheat. In other words, we have been trying to get our young daughter into a Good School. In our youth it had been all too easy for our parents to place us in boarding schools. Choice must have been the only difficulty. But to-day the whole thing has become a question of the survival of the fittest.

We had entered Mary for several schools as a precaution, placing first the one at which I was once a rude and mottled pupil. I remembered it as a crucible that forged "gentility" rather than scholarship. Allvery Jane Austen. But to-day it professes itself to be celebrated for things we had never even heard of. (It was a comfort to discover that when Mary sat the entrance exam she hadn't heard of some of them either.) However, she passed this initial test, and in due course we were summoned to attend upon the Headmistress for an interview.

As we sat on the edge of our chairs, waiting for Miss Phipps to appear, I was aware of the same disquieting internal sensations that used to beset me when I was summoned hither for unladylike behaviour. Several other sets of parents looked as uncomfortable as I felt. Presently Miss Phipps entered. We all rose. She looked us over briefly, as the head of the Gestapo would no doubt sift the dregs of a third-rate concentration camp.

"Good afternoon! Now I suppose you all know that we have three hundred applications and only forty vacancies?" This was accompanied by a bland, inquisitorial smile. We tried to accept it in the spirit of airy persiflage in which we hoped it was meant. I wondered whether Miss Phipps would present us with a bunch of three hundred twigs, forty shorter than the rest, and ask us all to draw one. Or should we just cut the cards?

One parent, bolder than the rest, moistened her lips and ventured to say: "I suppose if our children have passed the extrance examination they stand a better chance?"

"Three hundred have passed," Miss Phipps said instantly, quelling foolish optimism.

"Then how," continued this rash person, "are you to make a choice?"
"That," said Miss Phipps ominously,
"is why I like to see the parents."

Somehow I felt that the list was now shortened to two hundred and ninety-nine.

I could hear the parent nearest to me breathing heavily. I looked at John and longed to catch an eye, but both were fixed glassily upon the inquisitor. I saw with horror that he had begun to shuffle, as he does when nervous tension mounts within him. He told me afterwards that he was thinking how much pleasanter it must be to place one's child in a charitable institution. What letters to the Press, what questions in the House, would arise from the least of these indignities! How hardly won is the privilege of paying large fees to have one's daughter educated!

Suddenly we found ourselves slipping through the fine sieve. "Is any mother an old pupil of the school?" My hand shot up instinctively. I could have bitten it off. Hauling it down as unobtrusively as possible I said huskily: "I was. And I do so want Mary to follow me here. I have such happy memories of my schooldays."

follow me nere.
memories of my schooldays.
"Let me see . . . Mary . . ." Miss
Phipps consulted her list. "Ah," she
said, nearly at the end. "But her
Maths were hopeless. Hopeless!"

"I was wretched at Maths," I croaked desperately, "but I have always managed to reckon change and so on. Besides, Mary's subjects are English and Geography. Surely she did well in those?"

"Passably," admitted Miss Phipps, checking untoward enthusiasm—"passably."

My hard-breathing neighbour now managed to murmur apologetically; "Speaking of Maths, my father was Professor of Mathematics at X University."

"Indeed?" Miss Phipps appeared to note her existence for the first time. "And what, may I ask, is your husband?"

He, poor man, rose, flushed like a detected choirboy, and said, "Well, not exactly Einstein, you know! Just a chartered accountant," and sat down, giggling nervously.

Someone rose at the back of the room and said in a voice used to presenting every shred of evidence for the defence: "I am a member of the legal profession and my uncle is the Bishop of Binfield."

"Thank you," Miss Phipps said briskly, as though we were really getting somewhere at last, and making a neat note of this information.

An unaccompanied lady shuffled to her feet and said, hardly audibly, "I am the widow of a member of the nobility." "The widow?" queried the inquisitor, pencil poised, as though this required some explanation. "By the way, your daughter found nothing to laugh at in the Radio Times." We all looked sadly at the hapless woman, as though to the mismanagement of widowhood she had added the clumsy production of an imbecile daughter. Miss Phipps smiled and was pleased to enlighten us.

"You see, we have various ways of testing intelligence to-day. A girl who can write quite a good essay may not know who produced 'Gone with the Wind,' or why. It is possible to reach quite a high standard in Maths without knowing how to fill in an Income Tax Return or which cream to use for removing make-up from the face. The bad old days of Reading, Writing and Arithmetic have gone. Our girls must learn to skim the cream of life; to scan headlines intelligently; to express themselves in wallpaper, and so on." She closed her notebook with a snap and rose. "Now I think I have all the information I require, thank you. My housekeeper will bring tea presently, but I must say farewell now and return to the children, who will be free to join you in a quarter of an hour. My secretary will inform you in due course whether your daughters have been placed. Good afternoon."

We all bowed and sat down, deflating cautiously. But as we drew breath to express ourselves without the aid of wallpaper the housekeeper entered with tea. Then our children crept in one by one, so we were obliged to leave in rotation, frustrated, inhibited, or as John said simply, sunk. The Royal Cloister Hotel, at which Mary said we must stay if she was to have an earthly chance of admission, charged us fifteen guineas for a night's lodging.

"Farewell. The very word was like a knell..." Two days later we received a telegram: "SORRY NO VACANCY FOR MARY. PHIPPS."

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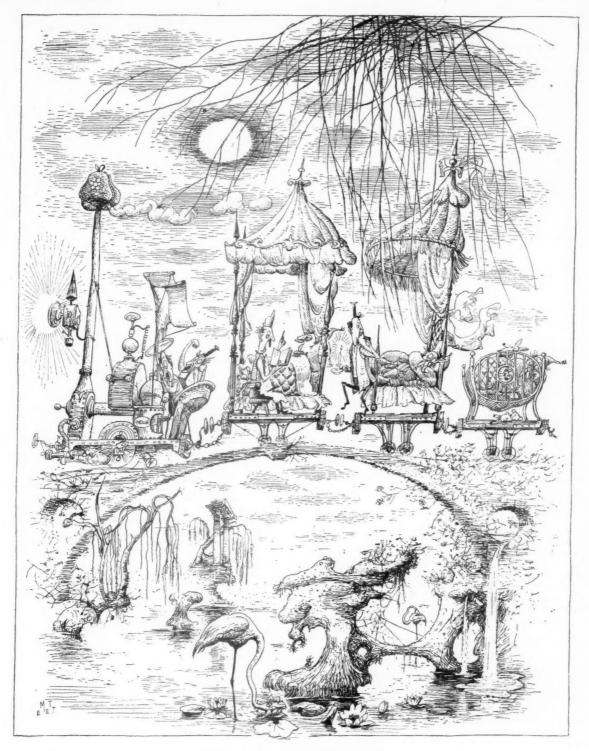
Over to You-Over

"Many in the House were reminded of the well-known army phrase 'passing the bucket' . . . "—"Dawn" (Karachi).

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"This tiny but wonderful invention, which rings like a full-size alarm clock, has now been named 'The Cricketer' after the small insect which makes a lot of noise."
"Christian Herald."

Any reference to George Duckworth is purely imaginary.



ANNALS OF A BRANCH LINE
III—The Night Sleeper to Oysterperch Bay

At the Play

Stone in the Midst (MERCURY)-"On Monday Next . . ." (EMBASSY)

FOR its courage in putting on verse plays we are much in the debt of the Mercury, but the staging of such a frankly undramatic piece as Mr. Patric Dickinson's Stone in the Midst is

Mr. Dickinson's play is about a Kentish family during a totalitarian occupation of England "the summer after next," and it is mainly concerned with the question of intellectual sur-

vival. Its conclusion seems to be that nothing can stop a jealous Philistine invader from smashing up material beauty, from knocking Wedgwood off the desk and slashing old masters, but that he is powerless to savage the treasures of the mind. I take that to be the nub of the play, but as the characters are very intense and make very long speeches and are themselves such mental doubt I find it difficult to say exactly. The situation has all the elements of drama-one son has been killed trying to blow up the local gauleiter, while the other, a successful composer of

rather odd music, is consistently rude to the tyrant when he drops in for a morning's sport among the heirlooms -but its effect in the theatre is very small because the characters are unconvincing and indeed sometimes tiresome mouthpieces for a flow of verse which, though fine phrases come out of it, has so little rhythm that it only gives the effect of heightened prose. It may be old-fashioned of me to think that verse written for the stage should be unmistakably verse, but I feel the halfway methods of Mr. Dickinson and others like him give an unnatural stiffness to the ordinary things of life without giving the bigger things the true freedom of poetry.

The cast at the Mercury grapples very fairly with these difficulties, Miss Jessica Spencer and Mr. John Richmond representing the younger generation, Miss Eileen Thorndike

the elder, and Miss Gwen Nelson adding a sharper note as the honest maid under the inquisition. All speak the verse well, Mr. MICHAEL WARRE directing.

If you sometimes wonder how crazy are the misadventures of rehearsal, you will get a rough but amusing answer in Mr. Philip King's burlesque of life in a provincial repertory, "On Monday Next . . . " at the Embassy. Its basic idea is excellent. We, the audience, have gate-crashed on the first rehearsal of a new play by an unknown author, and are begged by the harassed producer to go home. On finding that we intend to stay he accepts the situation on condition that we keep quiet. The members of the company begin to drift in, but it is a long time before rehearsal gets under way, partly because of severe clashes of temperament and partly because of a small figure that creeps timidly on to the stage. This is the author, a gnome spectacled and mufflered, anxious to interpret the beauty of his thought and imagining, as perhaps you still do, that what a writer's heart has bled is sacred to the men and women charged with its expression. He is rapidly undeceived, as page after page of his script is cut by the producer as totally unactable. The cast suffers varying degrees of hangover and boredom, with very little encouragement the stage manager and the producer embark on a spate of reminiscence in the grand manner, and everything goes wrong, the producer even falling into the orchestra pit and nearly killing himself. Mr. King's treatment of all this is spirited (though I thought it not so funny as have some other critics); it has an authentic flavour and behind it understanding of the courage with which stage folk on the fringe face the fantastic hardships of their life.

This production owes a great deal to the vivid personality of Mr. Henry Kendall, who plays the tyrannical producer with prodigal flamboyancy, and to Mr. Richard Goolden's extraordinary talent for simulating the eccentric. His baffled author is a little gem of character-acting. Miss Olga Lindo, Miss Mary Mackenzie, and Mr. Charles Lamb are the pick of the rest.

"The visit by Chislehurst Residents Association to the Imperial telephone exchange will take place to-morrow (Saturday) at 10, and not last Saturday, as previously announced."
"Chislehurst and Kentish Times."

Well, we shall just go on looking forward to *last* Saturday.



PRODUCER AND AUTHOR

Maud Barren							MISS OLGA LINDO
Harry Blacker							MR. HENRY KENDALL
The Author .							MR. RICHARD GOOLDEN

likely only to scare people away from a medium of which all but a small minority are shy anyway. As a radio play it is said to have come across better, and I can believe this, for on the air there is less necessity to trouble with the physical implications of the abstract. When you are listening, and not looking as well, you do of course mentally clothe what you hear in some sort of form, but this is comfortably vague and leaves ideas free to make their own impact. In the theatre things are quite different, a fact which the poet turned dramatist too often fails to realize. He cannot hold our interest by thought and language alone, however rich these may be, for the very good reason that he has undertaken to demonstrate their meaning before our eyes. Unless the demonstration satisfies our heads and hearts then the effort is wasted.

My Kingdom for a Horseless Carriage

T seems to me there is a good book waiting to be written on the social relations between man and the motor-car. Such a book would set orthodox psychology rocking back on its heels-if it has any heels.

I put the problem to Wimshurst in 1938. I said to him: Why have the members of my family never been able to buy a car less than twenty years old? Of course the bearded old idiot didn't know. And yet, in its imbecilic way, it is quite a searching question. Even when they could afford something new my relatives have haunted the junk yards, always hoping to find a machine that had to be steered with a tiller. Indeed, it wasn't until the land-speed record stood at about 300 m.p.h. that my Aunt Beatrice, a keen motorist in her day, heard that the term "horseless carriage" had more or less fallen out of use. Probably she had come across the word 'automobile" and had thought it was the name of a cough syrup.

My cousin Clarence, a distant and rather dim relative on my mother's side, once had an old Marlborough which he could start only by pushing it down hill. He fitted up a pair of reins so that he could get control as soon as he had scrambled in over the hood. Maybe motoring history will remember this as the first genuine instance of back seat driving. Of course you couldn't go anywhere in a car like that; the only place where it could be parked was on the brow of a hill not less than one in eight. This meant, in the end, that Clarence had to move down to Cornwall. Rather awkward for a man who was the manager of a City bank.

About the time I first went to prep school my father bought a very old Panhard, and we used it once a year to go south for our summer holiday. It was so roomy, he said. There was only one man in London who could drive it: an old employee of my father's who, in his youth, had been in charge of a horse-bus. He would come to the coast with us and spend the three weeks getting the car ready for the return run.

I won't deny I could see my father's point about it being roomy. When we went on holiday in those days there was no nonsense about its being a change. We took our environment with us, and that included food. My mother had a fixed idea that famine was widespread everywhere south of Croydon.

Cocker, that was the man's name, brought the great thing round about the first Friday after Bank Holiday.

We thought the roads would be quieter by then, for Cocker and the Panhard; both liked a good deal of room to work The family turned up in quite surprising numbers for the occasion and usually we got our luggage into the car in about four hours. We made it once in three hours twenty-three minutes, but it was a shoddy piece of work. In the morning, when we went aboard, we found there was no room for my younger brother, and we had to strap him to the running board. He came loose about Horsham, and he has the scar to this day.

That Panhard was a fine car, large and rather showy, like a Wagnerian tenor. The designer must have had a stage coach in mind, with a State barge and a railway waiting room nagging

at his subconscious.

The most poignant part of the

journey was always our ascent of Bury Hill. That cruel climb must have convinced many an early motorist of the existence of evil. The horrors we endured in that old roadster must have engraved on my heart the word Bury, in seventy-two-point caps. In fact it wasn't until much later, when I began to dissect the dog-fish, that Bury Hill was supplanted in my mind as a symbol of all that is most difficult in human endeavour.

Even now I sometimes dream of the Wimshurst had some moronic theory about it, but I know that the repulsive old quack is wrong. truth is that cars in the old days had character; they left their mark on a man's soul.

It all goes to prove what I say: the roots of man's struggle with the horseless carriage are bitter, and very, very deep.



"I just like to strut around."



" Butterfingers!"

Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Who Was Marguerite?

In the September of 1848 Matthew Arnold was travelling in Switzerland; at that time he was twenty-five and a dandy in politics, in theology and in appearance, for he oiled his whiskers with a preparation called Odontoglossum. At Thun he met a girl with blue eyes whom he called, in his poems at least, Marguerite; the affair ended unhappily, and out of that unhappiness Arnold wrote some of the most beautiful lyrics, surely, in the English language. Two years later he met and married Miss Wightman. As to what really happened, that is anyone's guess, for Arnold, to the extreme annoyance of his later critics, refused to give himself away. Now Miss Isobel Macdonald, in The Buried Self (Peter Davies, 12/6), has carefully reconstructed both love affairs in the form of a novel. Mr. Hugh Kingsmill thought that Marguerite was a governess or, certainly, Arnold's social inferior; Miss Macdonald makes her a French coquette with a dubious aunt. The novel is most carefully documented (p. 31, "There is no means of knowing how the breakfast service in the Hotel Bellevue was decorated in 1848"), and Miss Macdonald, quite rightly, gives great attention to the books Arnold was reading at the time-Georges Sand, Obermann, Lessing; and she includes many glowingly sentimental descriptions of the Alps which Arnold himself would probably have enjoyed very much. It is a wholehearted attempt to see the poet from the inside; and if we feel that he never quite comes to life, his own friends made just the same complaint. Only in his poems, in that starry solitude, we can glimpse for a moment the agony of his loneliness.

The Duchess of Leinster

Some readers may chafe a little at the copious detail of Mr. BRIAN FITZGERALD'S history of the life and times of Emily, Duchess of Leinster (Staples, 15/-). But a terser treatment might have been inappropriate to the Duchess, who, though amiable and beautiful, is qualified to be the central figure of a biography chiefly because of the various persons connected with her during her long life, in which she married twice and bore more than twenty children. Her first husband, the Earl of Kildare and later the first Duke of Leinster, was one of the earliest great Irish landlords to exert himself to improve the terrible conditions in which the Irish peasants lived in the middle of the eighteenth century. Their eldest son, the second duke, was as wellintentioned though not as able as his father, and his political life will probably interest the reader less than his Grand Tour, excellently described by Mr. FITZGERALD, through France, Italy and Germany. Far abler and more attractive was his younger brother, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who lost his life while leading the Rebellion of 1798. Both his character and the poverty of the Irish may be seen in his dying exclamation—"Would to God I had thirty thousand guineas—they would make thirty thousand happy men! A guinea would do a great deal with a poor man!" The Duchess long outlived Lord Edward, and was herself outlived by her second husband, Mr. Ogilvie, a Scot of undistinguished birth, odd and crotchety, but honest and good-hearted.

Slippered Pantaloon

It is a very down-at-heels Spain, dithering on the brink of Civil War, that finds itself portrayed in Granada Window (Falcon Press, 9/6). It is perhaps unfortunate that the peninsula's most popular "English" reporters should have been Miss Kate O'Brien, Dr. Starkie and Miss Marguerite STEEN, none of whom has exactly an "English" outlook. Those of us who still "nibble at Spanish" with Shelley and FitzGerald will discover here only an occasional skill in landscape-painting and an informed enthusiasm for flamenco singing. The rest is the usual reaction of the intelligentsia, which, having rightly decided that local colour is of the soil, takes its soil in the grubbier aspects of humanity. "It is part of the Nordic cult," says Miss Steen, "not to take Don Juan seriously." She does her best to correct this indifference; and gives us a series of unprepossessing local portraits with the bull-ring thrown in for good measure. Apart from toreadors, the men appear to live largely on the women; but the traditional patience of these beasts of burden is waning with the religion whose sanctions have been so unequally applied. The author has physical courage and the courage of her lack of convictions. A dangerous escapade in the Sierra and the endurance of a Granada winter show her at her best.

India the Lovable

In spite of an occasional intrusion of thugs from the city or of Pushkar Ram's Performing Pachyderms (a disturbing influence on the buffaloes), Mr. Sudhin N. Ghose's story of little Indian children is pervaded by an atmosphere of gentle wonder and fairylike innocence. He calls it And Gazelles Leaping (Michael Joseph, 12/6). Here in a village community near Calcutta Bibi Svenska, a saint-like Swedish lady, is conducting "Our School" for the benefit of small boys. The boys, one of whom is the narrator, are

allowed no toys by fanatically-minded parents and dare not even wish to see a circus or eat an ice-cream, but they have their pets, from pink mice or an artful duck to a haughty white donkey and a shy little elephant that figures largely in the narrative, and they discuss, in an atmosphere of grave wistful simplicity, problems of the nursery and of the universe with Peon-Dada the postman, Cha-Cha the wheelwright and Tu Fan's father. The story of how Bibi Svenska and her heroic ally Moti-Didi the washerwoman defeated the land-grabbing company aiming to develop the district is told with spirit, but it is the gentle philosophy, child mind and adult mind mingling, the neverfailing sense of honour, and most of all the underlying assumption of common fellowship and understanding between man and beast that give this volume, charmingly illustrated and enriched by little songs with their music, a quality all its own. Here is a bit of the India that does not often show itself abroad.

Mrs. Gatty and Mrs. Ewing

In Mrs. Gatty and Mrs. Ewing (Constable, 15/-) Mrs. CHRISTABEL MAXWELL, a granddaughter of Mrs. Gatty, has given a delightful, sensitive and discriminating account of two very highly gifted women. Mrs. Gatty, who was born in 1809, made her name in the eighteen-fifties with "Parables from Nature," which in its blending of accurate scientific observation and ethical feeling appealed strongly to the mid-Victorians and won Tennyson's friendship. Mrs. Gatty's home was at Ecclesfield in Yorkshire, where her husband, Dr. Gatty, was the vicar. They had ten children, and Dr. Gatty being easy-going Mrs. Gatty undertook by far the heavier share of the domestic burdens. Very resilient and cheerful, she made her home a happy one in spite of the ceaseless strain, under which she at last broke down. For some years she collaborated in authorship with her daughter, Juliana Horatia, who, as Mrs. Ewing, showed in "Jan of the Windmill," "Lot-be-by-the-"Jackanapes" and many other stories, a real genius for the peculiarly Victorian art of writing for children. "Jackanapes" contained the seeds of "The Brushwood Boy"; and Kipling acknowledged a great debt to another of her stories, "Six to Sixteen." Delicate and always overworked, she died in her middle forties, after a marriage which proved unsatisfactory; for her husband, easy-going like her father, was in the army commissariat, and enjoyed roving about on not too active service, in the comfortable conviction that his wife was earning enough to dispense with an allowance from him.

Apologia of a Liberal Economist

It used to be said of Tory legislators that they found the Whigs bathing and ran off with their clothes. To-day, with a Conservative sporting his vest and a Socialist his pants, the modest Liberal seems to have beaten a retreat just when he is most needed. It takes a Wandering Scholar (COHEN AND WEST, 18/-) of seventy-six to appear in the complete panoply of humanism; and in doing so Professor M. J. Bonn, late of the London School of Economics and with more visiting professorships than any man living, reminds us that there has always been a Germany worthy of friendship, admiration and a place in the councils of Europe. "Very dangerous, not yet hanged," was the Nazi verdict on the colonial expert who told the Frankfurter Zeitung that Africa was a black man's country, not a Tom Tiddler's ground for herrenvolk. The proclamation of

unpleasant truths, at proclaimer's risk, has always been a Liberal speciality; and Dr. Bonn takes a well-justified pride in the number and substance of his prophecies on characters, currencies and the trends of Old and New World history. His autobiography has the excitement that accompanies all attempts to smuggle contraband honestly across any and every frontier. Of our own imperviousness, "it is galling," he admits "... to see Prussian state socialism in these isles... at a time when Prussia herself has gone."

Scottish Mysteries

One of the best things about Mr. Hilton Brown's long (yet for the reader too short) book, Stands My House (METHUEN, 12/6), is that it contains a really first-rate story. In it we follow the fortunes of an old Scottish house from 1829 until some time after the end of the latest war. The plot is too involved to be described in a paragraph, and it is amazing how the author has avoided muddle in all the ramifications and harkings to and fro. Doodle-bugs that destroyed a London house sent a shell-shocked man to Scotland-there to unravel the tangles of a family secret, to bring the lusty dead to live before us, and to introduce us to an enchanting company of contemporaries. At the end we realize that we have been allowed not only to solve a mystery but to attend mysteries, for a strange air blew about the house. The feud between house and castle illustrates a Scottish perseverance in maintaining a grievance. The book is full of bracing compassion, humour, poetry and exciting occasions. What more can one ask?

B. E. B.



Tea-Trays in the Corridor

N Tuesday Mr. M. walked into the office and said "Where's that file about tea-trays?" Tea - trays?" we said.

trays?"
"Yes, tea-trays," he said. "Not

leaving them in the corridor." "In the corridor?" we said.

"In the corridor. No tea-trays to be left in the corridor."

'Oh, that memorandum," we said. "It was a directive," said Mr. M. "Well, a directive," we said. "All

right, a directive. But it wasn't a file.' "If it wasn't a file it ought to have en a file," said Mr. M. "When I been a file," said Mr. M. wrote that directive I sent an adden-

dum about loose tea-cups." "Loose tea-cups?" we said.

"Not on trays."

"Oh, loose. Tea-cups. Was this chit pinned on to the memorandum?"

"My addendum was sent a day later," said Mr. M., his voice cooling another ten degrees. "A day later than the directive.

"They probably got pinned together

in the end," we said.

"Pinned!" he said. "And there was the reply sent by Miss E."

"We didn't know Miss E. replied,"

"Miss E. wrote a memorandum on the lack of currants in the Tuesday

'Not a directive?" "A memorandum."

"Oh, a memorandum. Well, it wasn't a reply," we said.

"It arose out of my directive. Several things arose. Mr. F. raised the matter of rings left on his desk by hot

"Yes, we remember that," we said. "It was our cup he meant. We took it in when we . . .

So that there certainly ought to be a file," said Mr. M.

"Ah, a file," we said. "We'll look

"I would like it now," he said.

"We'll look into it right away," we

He went out and we looked into several things-an in-tray, a pendingtray, an out-tray and a filing-tray. Then we looked, without much hope, in the filing cabinet. We looked under T for Tea (or Tray), C for Corridor (or Complaint), M for Mr. M., and even G for Grumbles. Then we looked under the various parts of the telephone directory in their various parts of the room. We looked into the stationery cupboard, just in case. As a last hope we looked in that old cardindex that someone once started: the one which has a card for South America, Products of, a card for Q. O. Smithers, and a card for Unicorns, Myths Concerning. There were a few other cards. But there were no papers on Tea-trays in Corridors.

Mr. M. put his head round the door and said "Got it?"

We said not yet. Then we said we supposed he hadn't got it in his room? He looked offended and said he had no filing-cabinet in his room.

We followed him back and said

"May we just look?"

"You can look," he said, then humped into his chair, put his feet on the desk and blew out clouds and clouds of annoyed-looking tobacco smoke.

We looked through all his trays. He had nothing but an indiarubber in his in-tray. His out-tray had a notice about a carol-concert last Christmas, a booklet on civic rights and a large wad of blotting-paper. Pending took a good deal longer, but there were no papers on tea-trays.

We stood back and looked round the room, while he enveloped himself in an even thicker cloud of unknowing. We began feebly to turn out the wastepaper-basket.

It's not there," he said, not looking at us but at The Times crossword-

We had an idea. "Mr. F. might have borrowed it," we said. "Because of the

rings on his desk.

We went to see Mr. F., and had to stay for some time while he pointed out rings and complained about the people who made them. He tried to polish off one with his handkerchief. He said nothing had been done. Inertia, he said.

We went away as soon as we could and looked for Miss E. We found her at last, carrying a plate with two buns on it down the corridor. She said she hadn't had a currant in her bun for six weeks, and then it was only part of a currant. She said if nobody complained nothing ever got done.

We said we expected that was what Mr. M. thought. We went back to his room rather slowly. Mr. M.'s tea-tray was on the small table at the side of his desk. We thought if we took it away he might begin to brood about

something else.

We lifted it up and a slightly teastained bunch of papers fell off the under-side of it. We were putting them back on the table when our eye lit on the heading on one of them . . .

Reverently (and with an air of quiet efficiency) we placed the little messy bundle before Mr. M.

Mr. M. took down his legs from the desk and said "Ah." He called out to us "Come back; I want to give you a very important General Instruction. Head it," he shouted, starting at once, 'Milk Jugs, Use of as Flower-Vases.'

We planted the tray on the floor outside Mr. F.'s door opposite and bolted back into the room.

The Other End of the Telescope

UEEN ELIZABETH was the little round queen who liked tartans, wasn't she?" asked one of them.

"Goop! Elizabeth was the queen who had beer for breakfast and shut Nelson up in the Tower," hissed the

I looked at them savagely.

"This is enough to make me dance on my hat," I said. "Are you both still stuck fast in the Mud Age?'

"Goodness, no. We're at Agincourt.'

"And we've nearly got to Magna

"Nevertheless, you've spent years mucking about in Babylon and fooling about with Alaric the Goth, when you

might have been-Babylon's jolly interesting. It had

a hundred brazen gates.'

"And Alexander the Great used a hundred thousand men to clean the

'That's the sort of information that's going to take you a long way in the battle of life," I said bitterly. "I suppose you can tell me how many buttons Caligula had on his shirt?'

"He didn't have a shirt. Gallehawk says history's absolutely dynamite if it's not built on a proper foundation of knowledge."

"And Mr. Pelligrue says unless you understand how the world started you can't possibly understand things

to-day."

"Mr. Pelligrue's clever if he does either," I said. "Not that I've anything against him or Miss Gallehawk, both of whom seem very nimble professors, but only against the misguided system they're obliged to enforce. A system which takes no account of the awkward fact that history gets bigger every day and is already far too big for anyone to cope successfully with all of it.

"I'm jolly glad, all the same, I know

about Charlemagne."

"That's really what I'm getting at. It's nice to know about Charlemagne, but he isn't at the useful end of the list. You can't dine out on him as you could on Queen Victoria's uncles or even on the Boxer Rising. Anyone who dragged in Charlemagne at a party would very soon be ostracized.

"What is ostrichized?"

"When all the other guests put their

heads in the soup."
"Well, how far did you get with

history at school?"

"I just managed to see Charles the First beheaded, and it was said I had done wonderfully to have reached the Stuarts at all. Nobody ever mentioned to me the amusing things that happened when steam and coal came along, and when I left school I didn't know the difference between a Liberal and a Conservative. My parents thought they were sure to have told me at school, and at school they thought the same of my parents. I got in quite a little state about it, until a man in a train very decently made the whole business clear between Swindon and Paddington."

"What is the difference?"

"Oh, quite a different difference from what it was then."

"I don't see how else history could be taught. You don't mean you'd cut the Mud Age out and start in with

William the Conqueror?'

"I'd be much more drastic. I'd cut out everything, and start with to-day. While your little minds were still unscratched I'd try to tell you very simply just what sort of a mess the world is in. When you asked what got us into such a mess, as you would, we'd jump back forty years or so, and I'd show you how countries that made things made too many things until the competition to sell them grew so hot that a world war for world markets was the result. You'd ask why people were silly enough to make too much, and then we'd go back another eighty years or so to the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution, and see what followed the birth of the railways and the factories. How big towns grew up, and everyone learned to think differently about all kinds of important things, including You'd naturally want to politics. know what life was like just before all this happened, and so I'd tell you how beautifully peaceful and well-nourished the Early Victorians were if they had even a little money, but how utterly wretched they could be if they hadn't. You get the idea? It would be like exploring a river to its source. Far

more exciting than merely walking downstream to the sea."

"But supposing we never got to

Babylon?'

"A pity, but not nearly such a pity as the present system of never reaching your own times, at any rate until you're probably sick to death of history and thinking of getting married or going into the Army.'

Mightn't we forget the important new part if we started it very young?"

"I shouldn't let you. Half your history periods all the way through school would be spent in doing the last two hundred years more and more

thoroughly, from every possible angle, until you knew exactly where you were

"It sounds pretty grim to me. Have you ever said anything about

"Good gracious, no. It's far too sensible to be taken seriously. If I breathed a word of it we'd have headmasters queueing up to fight me, and the 'phone black and blue with history mistresses."

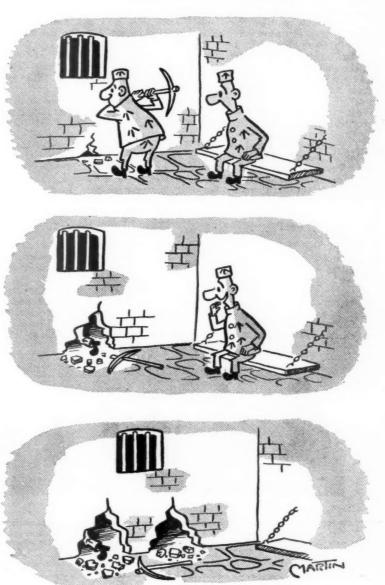
"You'd rather I didn't tell Miss

Gallehawk?"

"Or Mr. Pelligrue?"

"Much rather," I said.

ERIC



Jim Scraggs and the Kentucky Pea-Rifle

N one of Mr. T. S. Eliot's poems the following lines occur:

"The memory throws up high and dry

A crowd of twisted things; A twisted branch upon the beach Eaten smooth, and polished . . ."

He was musing, I take it, and he happened to think of these twisted things. About a week ago I found myself, between getting the coal in and changing my library book, with ten minutes in which I had absolutely nothing to do. I decided to spend the time in musing. I had done very little of it, but nevertheless I felt that there was just a chance that my mind might throw up something of value. In about two minutes it had presented me with the sentence "Jim Scraggs used the long Kentucky pea-rifle, so-called because it fired a bullet no larger than a pea."

What comes out must first go in. Where had I garnered this little fact about Jim Scraggs? Was it from a book? The last book I had read was Sir James Jeans's The Mysterious Universe, and although I had skipped a few pages, mainly about relativity, I felt pretty certain that there had been no mention of a Kentucky pea-rifle. Nevertheless, I looked into the book again, thinking that possibly the thing was part of some boyhood reminiscence included in the preface, or that the pea-like bullet had been used as an illustration of the relative sizes of earth and sun, or something of the kind.

There was a great deal of interesting reading in the book. I suppose that few of us have had the opportunity to satisfy ourselves as to what happens

when a million tons of halfpence are thrown into the air. Now, thanks to the energy and perseverance of the author, we know, without having recourse to a tedious experiment, that half a million tons will come down heads and half a million tons tails. Our respect and admiration are not lessened when he adds that the result will be the same however many times the operation is repeated. There was much information besides, of a less purely financial nature, on such subjects as nebulæ and the space-time relationship—as earlier readers of the book will remember. It was all very interesting, as I say, but there was nothing about Jim Scraggs and the Kentucky pea-rifle.

It now occurred to me that I could rid my mind of the sentence-I was beginning to tire of it-in other ways than by tracking it to its source. We may be sure that Mr. Eliot did not tolerate for long a mind filled with twisted branches, but got them on paper as speedily as possible. I am not much of a poet, and I do not hesitate to lean on stronger men, so as a preliminary to composition I tried the effect of substituting the words "Kentucky pea-rifle" for the names of weapons occurring in lines of great poetry. A couple of examples will be sufficient to show that the experiment was a failure.

"Keep up your bright Kentucky pearifles, for the dew will rust them."

"I have no words—my voice is in my Kentucky pea-rifle."

I blundered doggedly on, trying to fit Jim Scraggs into some poetical scheme, but it appeared to me that Wordsworth himself would have been daunted by the task, and at last I decided to try to put the whole thing out of my mind.

A few days later I happened to meet Barton, a man with whom I do a good deal of business. He gave me a rather keen look and asked whether I had been overdoing it lately. "I don't think so," I said. "Why do you ask?" "You sent me a curious letter yesterday," he replied. "The first part was perfectly normal, but you ended with the words 'The Kentucky pea-rifle is so-called because it fires a bullet no larger than a pea,' and you signed yourself 'Jim Scraggs.""

It would have been an act of folly to have attempted to explain the whole matter to Barton. He is a shrewd, hard business-man, and I doubt if he has done so much as a minute's musing in the whole of his life. The position was bad enough as it was, and I hastily explained that my mind had been full of a shooting expedition which I had planned for the following week. "Scraggs and I hope to knock over a few wild duck," I said.

"Do you know," he replied, "I have never fired a shot in my life, except at a fairground. I'll come with you." "We start very early," I faltered.

"Never mind that," he said heartily.
"I'll pick you up a couple of hours before sunrise, and Scraggs as well. I have no weapon, but no doubt you can fit me out with an old pea-rifle."

I cannot help wishing that my mind had thrown up something different—a bottle of champagne, for example. As it is, if I ever again bring in the coal and find myself with ten minutes to spare before changing my library book, I shall simply bring in a lot more coal and leave musing to those who have the knack of it.



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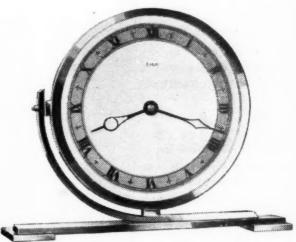


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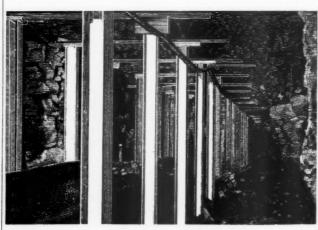


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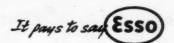
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SPECIAL NOTE TO USERS: To ensure that Magnum refills are conserved for the use of genuine Biro users your dealer may ask to see your pen. Please accept that this precaution is in your own interests.

THAT LOOK



If your dog looks at you reproachfully, don't cast your mind back and wonder what you said to offend him. More likely that look means that he is feeling off colour. He needs a spring medicine and he deserves the best. It must be one with the right ingredients-a first-class tonic, of course; a kindly laxative to cleanse the blood; the all-important vitamins and salts. The answer is Karswood Dog Condition Powders and Tablets.

Some dogs like the Powders sprinkled on their food. Others prefer to chew the Tablets, like sweets. ALL dogs are better for Karswood Conditioning, and most of the successful breeders give Karswood regularly. If you don't know the light that real health puts into a dog's eyes—start with Karswood today.

KARSWOOD DOG Conditioning

POWDERS and TABLETS

In cartons 24 for 1/9-8 for 9d.-Special Kennel Pack 144 for 8/6

Another Sufferer Praises
MACLEAN BRAND STOMACH POWDER

If you suffer from Indigestion read this tribute to Maclean Brand Stomach Powder.

Dear Sirs,
Just a few lines to let you know that I have tried your Stomach Powder for pains in the stomach . . . I really was in great pain so a friend of mine asked me to try Macleans Stomach Powder and I got a bottle. In about three days I felt all right and my pains have gone . . . I will never be without a bottle in my home and will always recommend it to all my (Sgd.) J.K.

Such letters of praise for Maclean Brand Stomach Powder are convincing evidence of its efficacy in relieving Heartburn, Flatulence, Nausea and Stomach Pains due to Indigestion. Why not start taking Maclean Brand Stomach Powder yourself and find the same measure of grateful relief from your Indigestion.

Maclean Brand Stomach Powder Price 2/18 and 6/8 Also in Tablet Form Maclean Brand Stomach Tablets Price 1/8 & 2/18 and in Handy Pocket Pack 10d. Only genuine if signed "ALEX. C. MACLEAN."

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queues fuss or delay. You need no visa, just a passport or travel identity card, and there are no currency restrictions. Phone Aer Lingus, BEA or your local travel agent for information and immediate bookings. Send your goods by air, too.

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Legacy forms or Deed of Covenant forms supplied on request

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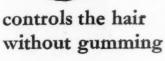
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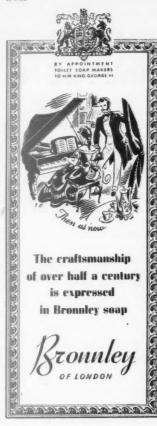
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to every flagon . . . 5 full glasses too. It's worth asking for Bulmer's Cider.

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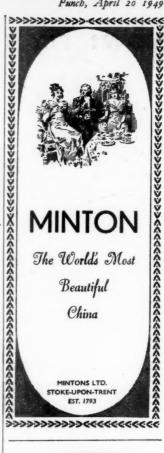


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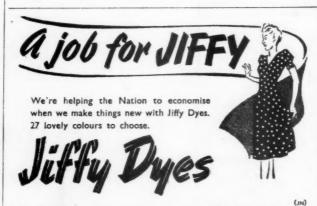
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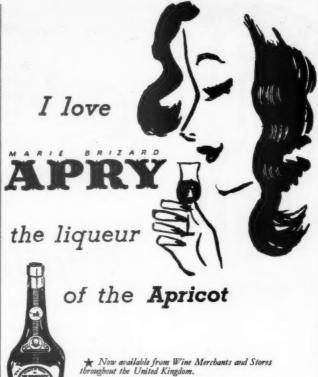
These powerfully antiseptic pastilles keep chest and throat free of catarrh and congestion. Wonderfully effective in staving off influenza, hay fever, croup, etc. 1/4½ per tin.

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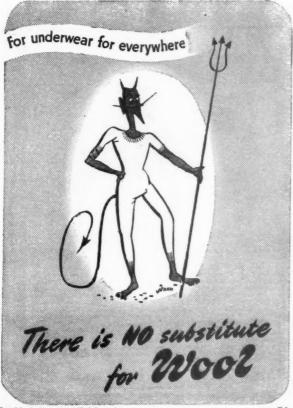
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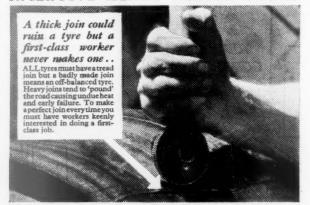
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Created for those who value distinction and look for an unusual degree of quality in their toilet accessories . . . Cussons Imperial Leather, Apple Blossom, and Linden Blossom Toilet Powders and the famous White Cross Baby Powder.

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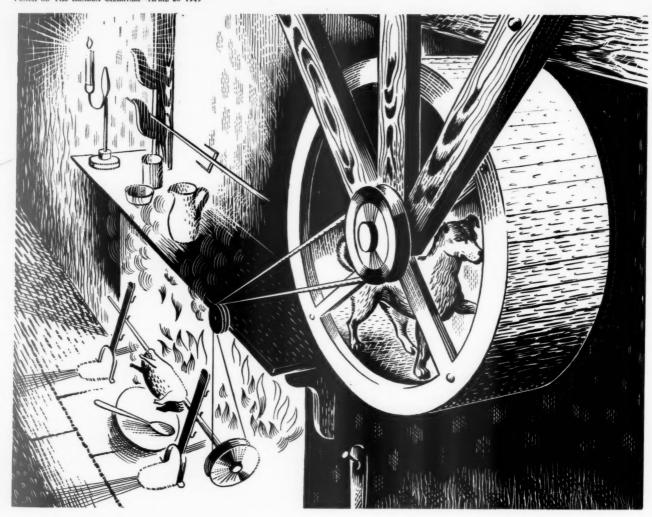
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It was a dog's life even in 1697. Topsel, writing in that year of the dogs who worked the treadmills for turning the roasting spit, says: "They go into a wheel, which they turn about with the waight of their bodies, so diligently... that no drudge... can do the feat more cunningly". Thus the turnspit dog who turned the spit but ate not of the roast became a symbol of one who does all the work but gets none of the profit.

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